

Message Text

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ORIGIN NEA-09

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S/PRS:MR. KING (INFO)

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD PRIORITY

UNCLAS STATE 284032

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, PK

SUBJECT:NOON BRIEFING EXCHANGE ON EARTHQUAKE

FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF EXCHANGE AT DEPARTMENT NOON BRIEFING
DECEMBER 31:

I WOULD ALSO LIKE TO MAKE A COUPLE OF COMMENTS ON THE DIS-
ASTER WHICH HAS STRUCK PAKISTAN.

THE PAKISTAN ARMY AND CIVIL AUTHORITIES HAVE UNDERTAKEN
RELIEF OPERATIONS, AND WE UNDERSTAND THAT SIX UH-1 RESCUE
HELICOPTERS DONATED BY THE U.S. GOVERNMENT IN THE WAKE
OF THE 1973 INDUS FLOOD DISASTER ARE BEING USED TO AIRLIFT
MEDICAL TEAMS, CLOTHING, A FIELD HOSPITAL AND TENTS TO THE
DISASTER AREA.

OUR OFFICIALS IN PAKISTAN ARE STAYING IN TOUCH WITH THE
PAKISTANI AUTHORITIES.

WE UNDERSTAND THAT THE GOVERNMENT OF PAKISTAN HAS NOT RE-
QUESTED INTERNATIONAL ASSISTANCE. HOWEVER, HENRY BYROADE,
OUR AMBASSADOR TO PAKISTAN, HAS ASKED FOR AND BEEN GRANTED
AUTHORITY TO MAKE AN INITIAL CONTRIBUTION OF DOLS 25,000
TO A RELIEF FUND SET UP BY PRIME MINISTER BHUTTO.

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I MIGHT ALSO NOTE THAT WE HAVE NO REPORTS THAT ANY AMERICANS HAVE BEEN AFFECTED BY THIS TRAGEDY.

Q. YOUR OPENING STATEMENT DOESN'T MAKE CLEAR WHETHER THE HELICOPTERS WERE ALREADY THERE.

A. YES.

Q. THEY WERE PREVIOUSLY DONATED AND ALREADY THERE.

A. THAT IS RIGHT.

Q. SO WHAT ARE WE TAKING BOWS FOR? THE HELICOPTERS ARE ON THE SCENE, AND THEY BELONG TO PAKISTAN--BEFORE THE DISASTER.

A. THAT IS RIGHT. THEY WERE PROVIDED TO PAKISTAN ON THE OCCASION OF THIS PREVIOUS FLOOD DISASTER. I AM MERELY NOTING FOR YOUR INFORMATION--

Q. IN OTHER WORDS, WE DIDN'T TAKE THEM BACK IN THE WAKE OF THE DISASTER.

A. NO -- I AM MERELY NOTING THE FACT THAT THEY ARE BEING USED.

Q. THAT'S TERRIFIC. IS THE DOLS 25,000 AMERICAN MONEY OR IS IT MR. BYROADE'S MONEY?

A. THAT IS U.S. GOVERNMENT FUNDS.

Q. ARE ANY OF THE BLANKETS AND TENTS AND WHATEVER ELSE AMERICAN STUFF?

A. NO.

Q. THAT IS ALL PAKISTANI.

A. THIS IS PAKISTANI. AS I SAID, THE PAKISTANI AUTHORITIES HAVE NOT REQUESTED INTERNATIONAL ASSISTANCE.
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Q. HAVE THEY REQUESTED OUR ASSISTANCE?

A. NO, THEY HAVE NOT REQUESTED INTERNATIONAL ASSISTANCE.

Q. PRIME MINISTER BHUTTO YESTERDAY DID MAKE AN APPEAL, I UNDERSTOOD, FOR FUNDS FROM THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY, SAYING "ALL WE CAN DO IS BRING THE SITUATION TO THE

COMMUNITY'S ATTENTION AND HOPE THAT IT WILL RESPOND."
HAS THAT BEEN TAKEN UP?

A. WELL, I AM NOT AWARE OF THAT, AND THAT WASN'T THE
INFORMATION THAT WAS GIVEN TO ME.

Q. HAVE THERE BEEN ANY MESSAGES FROM THE SECRETARY OF ANY
KIND TO HIS COUNTERPART?

A. I THINK THAT THE FOCUS OF THE DISCUSSIONS HAS BEEN IN
PAKISTAN, BETWEEN OUR EMBASSY AND OUR AMBASSADOR AND THE
PAKISTANI AUTHORITIES.

Q. BY THE WAY, THIS MAY NOT BE GERMANE, BUT WHEN WE GIVE
HELICOPTERS TO PAKISTAN, DO WE PRESCRIBE HOW THEY ARE TO
BE USED? FOR EXAMPLE--THAT THEY REMAIN IN PAKISTAN IN-
STEAD OF BEING SENT TO OMAN OR TO ARAB COUNTRIES?

A. WELL, I ASSUME THAT THE THIRD-COUNTRY TRANSFER PRO-
VISIONS APPLY.

Q. APPLY TO HELICOPTERS AS WELL AS AIRCRAFT?

A. APPLIES TO HELICOPTERS. I AM SURE THAT IT WOULD
HAVE TO GO THROUGH MUNITIONS CONTROL, EVEN IF THEY ARE
NOT MILITARY EQUIPMENT. SISCO

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